

Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SSO-00 CCO-00 NSCE-00 NSC-05 /033 R

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DRAFTED BY EUR/WE:JLIMPRECHT

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TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 102964 TOSEC 110283

FOLLOWING REPEAT MADRID 3308 ACTION SECSTATE 28 APR 76

17953

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 3308

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SP

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH APRIL 28

1. MINISTER OF JUSTICE GARRIGUE TOLD ME THIS MORNING THAT THE PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH THIS EVENING AT 9:30 LOCAL, WHICH WILL LAST ABOUT 45 MINUTES, WILL FIX A FAIRLY SPECIFIC TIMETABLE FOR THE REFERENDUM AND FOR GENERAL ELECTIONS.

2. SPECIFICALLY, THE SPEECH WILL ANNOUNCE A REFERENDUM FOR REFORM OF FUNDAMENTAL LAWS FOR OCTOBER. THE QUESTIONS PUT TO REFERENDUM WILL DEAL WITH THE LAW OF SUCCESSION AND WITH THE CREATION OF A BICAMERAL LEGISLATURE. (GARRIGUES COMMENTED THAT HE HAD FOUGHT HARD TO HAVE THE REFERENDUM AT AN EARLIER DATE. HE ALSO SAID THAT HE WAS OPPOSED TO THE SUBMISSION TO REFERENDUM OF ACTUAL LAWS. HE FELT IT BETTER TO SUBMIT SIMPLER QUESTIONS WHICH WOULD BE BETTER UNDERSTOOD BY THE VOTERS. HE ALSO COMMENTED THAT THE LOWER HOUSE WOULD BE ELECTED BY UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE AND THAT THE

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UPPER HOUSE WOULD, AMONGST OTHER THINGS, PROBABLY BECOME

THE GUARDIAN OF THE FUNDAMENTAL LAWS WHICH HE DID NOT THINK VERY DESIRABLE. GARRIGUES ALSO SAID THAT IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT THE REFORM OF ARTICLE 13 OF THE FUNDAMENTAL LAW ON LABOR MIGHT ALSO BE A SUBJECT FOR REFERENDUM, BUT THIS HAD NOT BEEN DECIDED YET.)

3. THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD ALSO ANNOUNCE THAT ALL REFORM LAWS, EXCEPT THE ELECTORAL LAW, WOULD BE COMPLETED BY THE GOVERNMENT AND READY FOR SUBMISSION TO THE CORTES BY MAY 15. THE ELECTORAL LAW WOULD BE READY BY JULY 15. THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD ALSO SAY THAT PRIOR TO THE END OF THIS YEAR. A DATE FOR GENERAL ELECTIONS FOR THE LEGISLATURE WOULD BE ANNOUNCED AND THAT THIS WOULD BE FOR SOME TIME IN THE FIRST MONTHS OF 1977. THESE GENERAL ELECTIONS WOULD THEN BE FOLLOWED BY MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS.

4. GARRIGUES SAID THAT THE SPEECH WOULD DEAL ALSO A GOOD DEAL WITH THE PAST, BUT AT LEAST IT WOULD FIX A CALENDAR AND THIS WAS IMPORTANT. AT THE SAME TIME, HE FEARED THAT THE SPEECH WOULD NOT BE WELL RECEIVED BY THE DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION AND THIS IN ITSELF IS SERIOUS SINCE THE MONARCHY CANNOT DEPEND JUST ON THE RIGHT IT MUST ALSO HAVE THE SUPPORT OF THE LEFT WHICH MEANS EVERYBODY EXCEPT THE COMMUNISTS AND THOSE ADVOCATING TERRORISM AND VIOLENCE. GARRIGUES BELIEVED THAT THE KING MUST HIMSELF OPEN A DIRECT DIALOGUE WITH THE OPPOSITION SINCE ARIAS IS NOT SO INCLINED.

5. FINALLY, GARRIGUES BELIEVED THAT A GOVERNMENT CRISIS IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE WAS UNLIKELY AND, IN DEED, WOULD BE MOST DAMAGING TO THE MONARCHY WHICH WOULD BE REGARDED AS INCAPABLE OF MAINTAINING STABILITY. AT THE SAME TIME, THERE COULD BE NO DOUBT BUT THAT ARIAS WAS ANYTHING BUT PLEASED BY THE RECENT NEWSWEEK ARTICLE PURPORTING TO REPRESENT THE KING'S VIEWS ABOUT ARIAS.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TOSEC, GOVERNMENT REFORM, HEAD OF GOVERNMENT, SPEECHES, REFERENDUMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE102964
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JLIMPRECHT
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760161-0907
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760410/aaaaailq.tel
Line Count: 107
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 MAY 2004 by SmithRJ>; APPROVED <07 SEP 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH APRIL 28
TAGS: PFOR, SP, (ARIAS NAVARRO, CARLOS)
To: SECRETARY
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006